

REMARKS

Claims 1-9 are currently pending. Claim 1 is the sole independent claim, with claims 2-9 depending directly or indirectly from Claim 1. The point here being, if Claim 1 is patentable over the references applied thereto by the Examiner, all claims depending therefrom should also be found allowable.

The Examiner's rejection of Claim 1 (and 9) under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) is predicated upon the Silva reference (U.S. Patent No. 3,820,360) in view of Kain (GB 1,301,532). The specifics of this rejection are set forth at item #4 on pages 2 and 3 of the Official Action, and not herein repeated in detail. The grounds for rejection of the remaining dependent claims are discussed on pages 3-4 of the Official Action. All grounds for rejection are respectfully traversed.

The Examiner concedes that Silva does not disclose "setting the nip as a function of both upstream and downstream tension." According to the Examiner, this feature is taught by Kain at page 2, lines 43-44. Applicants do not agree.

First, Silva does not appear to teach, suggest or even hint that the velocity of the metal strip when it enters and exits the skin-pass rolling stand is set independently of the tension in the metal strip. While the Examiner points to column 1, lines 37-40 and column 4, line 4 as support for his argument that Silva does disclose this feature of the invention, Applicants do not understand what is referred to by the Examiner is at all related to the claimed feature. Instead, it would appear that Silva discloses connecting a

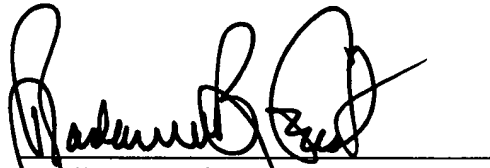
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tension regulator 64 by line 68 to a speed regulator 45 for the power supply 44 of a work roll drive motor 43. The Examiner is kindly requested to identify where in Silva, the claimed feature is disclosed.

Further, with regard to the Kain reference, the Examiner points out that Kain discloses measuring a strip parameter such as the strip "tension" as an input value for a correction device 22 that sends a corrector signal to the control device 25 of the rolling mill motor. Based on this teaching, it is clear that Kain does not disclose setting the velocity of the metal strip independently of the tension.

For the reasons advanced herein, Applicants request reconsideration and allowance of the pending claims.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Bradley B. Geist', is written over a horizontal line.

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